

TRADITION



Alonzo L. Wilson
Commissioner, 1957-1960

ALONZO L. WILSON (1957 – 1960)

Alonzo L. Wilson was appointed Commissioner of the State Banking Department February 15, 1957, by Governor G. Mennen Williams and resigned June 15, 1960.

Alonzo Wilson was born in 1890 on a farm near Scottville, Michigan, and had 48 years experience in the banking profession, starting as a clerk in a bank in Scottville in 1912. After service in the Army during World War I, he rejoined the bank but resigned in 1921 to work as an assistant state bank examiner with the State Banking Department.

A promotion to examiner followed and he continued in this capacity until 1927, when he left to become an examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. He was then given the title of acting assistant federal reserve agent. At this time the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago was in the process of changing the size of the currency and Mr. Wilson was in charge of this change for the Detroit Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

In 1929, Mr. Wilson took a position with a bank efficiency engineering company and made surveys for the Comptroller of the Currency and banks in many large cities. Because of this connection, he was then selected to reorganize a large bank in Warsaw, Poland, and spent a year in that position before he returned to the United States in 1932.

During 1932, he was asked to take charge of a national bank in Aurora, Illinois and to study its problems. Irregularities of a former officer were found and the bank was closed. Mr. Wilson remained as receiver until the bank holiday when he returned to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and assisted in the reorganization of banks in Michigan.

He was best known for his work with the federal government in reorganizing Michigan's bank setup after the national bank holiday which began in Detroit with the collapse of the Guardian Trust Company.

Wilson took a temporary position with the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C. on loan from the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago in 1933-34. In 1943 he was appointed chief examiner at the Detroit Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. He took a leave of absence in 1946 to serve as a finance officer with the War Department in Berlin,

Germany and resumed his duties in Detroit when he returned.

In 1950, he resigned to become president of the Traverse City State Bank and remained there for the next seven years until appointed Commissioner.

At year-end 1957, Michigan had 318 state banks, 2 trust companies, 2 industrial banks and 1 private bank, with 332 examinations of banks completed. In addition, the department also supervised 566 credit unions and 472 small loan companies.

Commissioner Wilson stated "My one regret about the new job as state banking commissioner is that I have to spend most of my time in Lansing. I'll only see my family on weekends." This also left him with little time for his two hobbies, knitting and his 14-acre vegetable garden.

"I don't think anyone can do much about what's going to happen tomorrow. What you have to do is think farther ahead than that, maybe five or six years and make plans for the future," he said "if I can get a couple of pieces of legislation passed that will help banking in times yet to come then I'll think I've done a good job, and if the job gets to be too much for me — why, I'll just hand in my resignation and come back to the farm — and my family." Alonzo L. Wilson passed away October 14, 1961.

COMMISSIONERS

Theodore C. Sherwood	1889 – 1896
Daniel B. Ainger	1896 – 1897
Josiah E. Just	1897 – 1898
George L. Maltz	1898 – 1903
George W. Moore	1903 – 1907
Henry M. Zimmerman	1907 – 1911
Edward H. Doyle	1911 – 1915
Frank W. Merrick	1915 - 1921
Hugh A. McPherson	1921 – 1927
Rudolph E. Reichert	1927 – 1936
Howard C. Lawrence	1936 – 1937
Charles T. Fisher, Jr.	1937 – 1938
Alvan Macauley, Jr.	1938 – 1939
Frederick B. Elliott, Jr.	1939 – 1941
Maurice C. Eveland	1941 – 1942
E. William Nelson	1943 – 1948
Maurice C. Eveland	1949 – 1956
Alonzo L. Wilson	1957 – 1960
Jerome J. Zielinski	1960 – 1961
Charles D. Slay	1961 – 1968
Robert P. Briggs	1968 – 1973
Richard J. Francis	1973 – 1980
Martha R. Seger	1981 – 1982
Eugene W. Kuthy	1983 – 1990
Russell S. Kropschot (Acting)	1991 – 1993
Patrick M. McQueen	1993 to date